



Ile Ife Films & the Arthur Hall Collection

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2013 President's Report

February 21, 2014

We began 2013 with a cash balance of \$219 and finished the year with a cash balance of \$1,655. Please see <http://www.ileife.org/iif/2013fin.pdf> for a consolidated financial statement for 2013.

The “First Quarter Report for 2013” (<http://www.ileife.org/iif/1stQtr2013.pdf>) noted our inability to reach an agreement with Lincoln University to establish a permanent home there for the Arthur Hall Collection. As president of Ile Ife Films and as the director of media preservation for the Arthur Hall Collection, I worked throughout December of 2012 and January and February of 2013 to define a collaborative work plan to preserve the collection and to ensure its broad public access. Lincoln University, for its part, wanted to end our ongoing work with Northeast Historic Film, they resisted even preliminary provisions for cataloguing or discussing protocols for preservation work, and they seemed to envision the collection’s accessibility as “only at Lincoln.” Ultimately, by the end of February, they required the immediate transfer of “ownership of the original film, video and photographic materials to Lincoln without restriction or condition.”

The special collection model assumed by Lincoln University was the traditional one in which a notable person, late in life, deposited his or her papers in an institution where the occasional researcher might look through them, now and then, every fifty years or so. Arthur Hall wanted his collected works to be a central resource in the proposed Arthur Hall International Dance Center in Rockland, Maine, a living legacy for dancers and choreographers, musicians and teachers, therapists and poets and artists, as well as historians and Africanist scholars. The new model for humanities collections in the digital age has evolved into an even broader vision of free public access online. I have discussed these issues with many people over the last twelve months, and the broad consensus is that in 2014 we would do well to approach again, chastened and wiser, Temple University as an appropriate host institution for the Arthur Hall Collection.

We have deposited all of the films and many videotapes of the Arthur Hall Collection in the climate-controlled vaults of Northeast Historic Film (NHF). With the help of our advisor Gemma Scott, we have established a PBCore database for the collection and have begun to enter the metadata for each item as it goes into the vault. NHF has new equipment for making digital preservation masters and an LTO system for the long term storage of those large files. As we produce preservation masters, we are making two duplicate LTO tapes, one to be stored at NHF and the other at our host institution, fulfilling the best practice of providing redundant digital masters in geographically remote archives. (See <http://www.ileife.org/3m2p/appendix911.pdf> for an inventory of the videotapes in the collection.)

Also in 2013, the Arthur Hall Collection provided footage for the film about Lily Yeh’s work, *Barefoot Artist*, which premiered at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. We also provided images and posters from the collection to the Philadelphia Folklore Project for their *Honoring Ancestors* exhibition. Nana Korantema helped arrange the exhibit, which includes both Arthur Hall and Elizabeth Roberts among the ancestors honored.

Dance Ensemble alumna Frances Scarborough used footage from the collection for her Community Visions production at Scribe Video Center. *Ione Nash – Her Life, Her Art*, by Arthur Hall Dance Ensemble Alumni, premiered January 7, 2014, at International House Philadelphia. Frances Scarborough also helped establish a system that enables us to ship digital files on a portable hard drive back and forth between Maine and a 3 TB hard drive at the Alumni's office at StarSpirit International.

The Rev. Dr. Margo Blake, also a Dance Ensemble alumna, visited Maine in June, and we recorded an interview to add to the Arthur Hall Collection. Excerpts are posted on YouTube.

Alumna Betty Alridge has agreed to take an active roll in opening an office for the Arthur Hall Collection in Philadelphia. Alumna Stephanie Amma Oyedi Young has agreed to join our Advisory Council, as has Louis Massiah, the founding director of Scribe Video Center. Iraina Salaam has agreed to help arrange the return of the Elizabeth Roberts Collection to Philadelphia.

As I mentioned in the 1st Quarter report, my old friend Rick Pedolsky has been advising us about the effective use of the new media. (See his website <http://www.amuze-interactive.com>). At his suggestion, we opened a professional account with Vimeo.com to carry Arthur Hall Collection videos online with higher quality and with more control over intellectual property. So far, seven videos have been uploaded and are available through our old website www.ileife.org and through the Arthur Hall channel online at <https://vimeo.com/channels/ahc>. We look forward to bringing our old website up to date, coordinating our developing database with search engines, and integrating the collection's resources with those of a host institution to make the Arthur Hall Collection a model for what a small humanities collection should look like in the 21st Century.

Our small nonprofit historical society will have the basic funding we shall need in 2014 to continue to make modest progress toward the conservation of the videotapes in the Arthur Hall Collection. I shall continue to work with the Arthur Hall Alumni in Philadelphia to provide access to the collection while we again discuss with Temple University the terms and conditions under which the Arthur Hall Collection could be permanently housed there. I shall update the 2011 NEH grant application to reflect the progress we have made, and I shall prepare a budget to complete the creation of digital preservation masters for the endangered videotapes in the collection. To those ends, please see http://www.ileife.org/iif/BDG_Jan_2014.pdf, in which Brenda Dixon Gottschild writes, in part, "Any help, in the form of referrals and/or contributions, will be greatly appreciated."

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce B. Williams